



- VOIP voice services may continue with a battery back-up. Batteries may last up to 8 hours of service. Check your modem/connection to be sure that it has a back up battery installed.
- Consider purchasing a back up battery for extended service in the event that the power outage is prolonged and your initial battery does not last the full 8 hours.
- Each year make a safety check of your modem battery backup, just as you do with alarms and smoke detectors. Contact your provider or authorized dealer to purchase replacement/backup batteries. Internet based voice service providers such Vonage, Magic Jack and Skype rely on an internet connection to process calls. You may not be able to make a call using these services during a power outage.

Payphones

- Most payphones connect to traditional landline connections and therefore will operate in the event of a power outage.
- Consider keeping a prepaid phone card available, particularly if you do not own a wireless phone, in order to ensure you are able to make calls over a payphone if necessary.



1000 Washington Street, Suite 820

Phone: 1-800-392-6066

Fax: 617-988-8288

E-mail: consumer.complaint@state.ma.us



DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR



BARBARA ANTHONY
UNDERSECRETARY



The Department of
Telecommunications and Cable

Geoffrey G. Why
Commissioner

STAY CONNECTED DURING EMERGENCIES



Tel: 1-800-392-6066 

Consumer Tips for Communicating During an Emergency or Power Outage

The Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications and Cable (DTC) offers the following helpful tips for consumers during emergency situations or power outages impacting their communications services. It is important to know that different services (for example, traditional wireline phone, wireless, or VOIP provided over telephone or cable companies' network) have different capabilities in emergencies or power outages. If you do not know what type of service you have, contact your provider.

For all services, it is important to keep a hard copy list of your important contacts. If you communicate via the



telephone network during an emergency, limit non-emergency calls, particularly if you are using a wireless device. Convey only vital information to emergency personnel and/or family members.

Dial 911 only to report actual emergencies.



Traditional Landline

(Home phone, provided by a telephone company such as Verizon)

During a power outage, traditional landline service that runs over a copper network will continue to operate. However, phone service over fiber (from your cable company, or Verizon FiOS) will not, and requires battery to continue operating during an outage (see VOIP below)

Keep a traditional corded phone for outages. Without power, a cordless phone will not work.

Wireless/Cell Phone

- Keep your wireless phone batteries charged at all times. Have an alternative source to recharge your battery, such as using your car charger or extra mobile phone batteries.



- Program all emergency contact numbers and email addresses into your phone.
- During emergencies, use text messaging to communicate instead of voice calls, as data-based services like texts and emails are less likely to experience network congestion.
- Keep your cell phone and all equipment dry to prevent damage caused by water.
- Providing the emergency situation does not disable your wireless carrier's primary network, you should be able to make calls.
- In the event of an emergency, you can use any wireless phone—even one that is not currently activated—to connect to 911.

VOIP / Digital Voice

(phone service from your cable provider, e.g. Comcast Xfinity Digital Voice, Verizon FiOS Digital Voice)

- Most telephone and cable companies offer voice telephone service using VOIP technology known as Digital Voice service. NOTE: Always inquire with your provider about the type of